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NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

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Indigent defense in Michigan: improvements on the far horizon



by Susan Beckett
Publisher &
Maria Hagen
Groundcover Intern

The symposium Innocent until Proven Poor, hosted by the Michigan Journal of Race and Law and University of Michigan (U-M) Law School in February 2016, explored abuses on a national level that have recently played out locally. The last two columns addressed "pay or stay" sentencing and the bail system, while this one focuses on inadequate public defender programs. Unless otherwise noted, information presented below was gleaned from experts at the symposium.

Our court system is adversarial, pitting the district attorney – representing the interests of the State – against the

defense attorney who represents the accused. Justice is rarely served when one side has vastly greater resources at its disposal.

Nonetheless, this is often the situation when people who can't afford a private attorney are represented by a public defender, despite effective defense being a provision in the Michigan Constitution and affirmed in the federal Constitution in the Supreme Court decision on *Strickland v. Washington*.

Michigan's public defender system, repeatedly subjected to budget cuts, has been identified as one of the worst and is making mandated improvements. In January 2013, Gov. Rick Snyder signed into law a bill that created the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission (MIDC). In February 2016 the MIDC published a report on the court systems in the state.

Of Michigan's 83 counties only three, including Washtenaw, have public defender departments whose attorneys are trained for these types of cases specifically. The 80 remaining counties either have a list of private attorneys that take indigent cases, or auction out the indigent case load each year to the local private firm with the lowest fee.

In these two systems the attorneys are usually paid per case, which leads to the lawyer wanting to end the case as quickly as possible. Often the judges are involved in choosing a lawyer or a firm for indigent cases, so there is pressure on the appointed defender to accommodate the desire of the judge and on prosecution to conclude the case quickly, according to state Rep. Jeff Irwin.

These inadequacies begin at show-cause and bail hearings where overwhelmed public defenders rarely do more than put in a token appearance. It continues in court as the hierarchy for hearings that day is invariably [private] defense attorneys, D.A.s and finally public defenders. The way they are called, it does not even sound as if the public defenders are attorneys.

In the event of a guilty plea, the disparities continue right through to the appeal. Private lawyers always put forward a motion for release of their clients pending appeal but public defenders never do, according to Alec Karakatsianis. The public defenders win about 30 percent of their appeals but over the three-and-a-half years it normally takes for that to happen, most clients have already served their sentence, guilty or innocent.

James was arrested in Syracuse, New York and charged with felony theft for stealing six bars of deodorant from a drug store. Bail was set at \$2,500 and he faced up to 14 years in jail. He never saw his court-appointed attorney outside of open court and once the attorney did not even show up for a court appearance.

Stories similar to that of James abound in Michigan, where reforms are now underway to remedy some of the circumstances that have our justice system ranked 44th. Egregious deficiencies in Michigan's criminal defense system (for example, public defenders at the 36th District Court in Detroit had 6,000 yearly clients each – as compared to the standard of 400 – leaving five minutes per client, with some clients entering into plea bargains with no counsel at all) led to scrutiny by advocates and the Supreme Court when the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) sued the State in *Duncan v. Michigan*.

Initial reform efforts are underway in the legislature, which has conceded that it must become at least a partial-funder of public defenders and expert witness/investigation resources and set minimum standards across counties.

The basic systems will not change, though the MIDC has laid out the first steps of a plan to improve the system. The four standards for courts that the MIDC has released for public feedback are focused on the responsibility of the public defenders. They set time limits for a first meeting, ensure a first interview before appearing in court, set requirements for the training and education of public defenders, and guarantee legal counsel at key moments in the legal process including at first appearance.

"This will at least marginally improve the system," said Rep. Irwin, who supports the standards. "There are some big questions being overlooked, like time and effectiveness [of the defender]. The recommendations are good. They're a push toward a better system."

On May 18, the Supreme Court of Michigan held a public hearing about the new standards from the MIDC. The endorsed speakers addressing the court were all members of the MIDC, representing different legal factions of the

courts in Michigan. Of the attorneys and judges who spoke, several issues were raised.

One lawyer questioned the constitutionality of creating new rights by raising the standards for the courts above those that are provided by the Michigan and federal Constitutions. The other arguments were more grounded in reality.

A defense lawyer from Traverse County who serves in three different counties said that the standards, as proposed, only add more work for counsel who are already overworked. He specifically stated that requiring a defense attorney to make contact within 72 hours is unrealistic, considering that he serves in three rural counties. "These standards are impossible. There is nothing in here that will help me provide better services for my clients," he said.

The last concern brought before the court was that of funding to enforce these standards. "The state needs to allocate resources," said the lawyer at the podium. Rep. Irwin also voiced concern about the State's ability to pay for these changes. "Are we ready to set aside resources to provide adequate defense?" he asked.

It is unknown when or if these standards will be implemented. Something clearly has to change in the Michigan courts to make them, as said one of the supporters of the changes, "fairer, more defendant-oriented." The set of new court rules discussed in front of the court on May 18 are a start, but there is so much more work to do.

"We know that," said Rep. Irwin. "I think they will do it in layers: start with the easiest recommendations and later work through the others."

We will be watching and reporting over the years it will probably take to bring our public defender system up to snuff. Meanwhile, keep in mind that it is quite possible that people with a record were actually guilty only of being poor.

GROUNDCOVER MISSION:

Creating opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

Susan Beckett, Publisher
contact@groundcovernews.com

Lee Alexander, Editor
c.lee@groundcovernews.com

Andrew Nixon, Associate Editor

Contributors

Liz Bauman

Martha Brunell

Sue Budin

Maria Hagen

Persephone Hernandez-Vogt

Elizabeth Kurtz

Angie Martell

Eddy Powell

Jess Salisbury

Letters to the Editor:
editor@groundcovernews.com

Story or Photo Submissions:
submissions@groundcovernews.com

Advertising:
contact@groundcovernews.com

www.groundcovernews.org


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What will make a difference?



by Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell
Groundcover Contributor

When I was a young pastor in the late 1970s, the Hyde Park neighborhood of Saint Louis, where I lived and worked, was already greatly stressed. Chopped up among three aldermanic districts, it received little City attention. Jobs were few. Critical institutions had departed years before. Absentee landlords were having buildings torched for the insurance money. Drug traffic was beginning to devastate the neighborhood. There was some renovation energy spilt between two groups that were generally warring with one another. People were hungry, kids were not getting a decent education, and hope was in short supply. When we made the morning or evening news, it was always for something negative and scary.

Into that mix came a young woman

named Karen who saw something the rest of us had missed. She figured out how we could be more effectively strategic in stretching limited resources with our hungry neighbors.

In those years, everyone's social security checks were sent out on the third of the month. From her neighborhood Lutheran church, Karen paid attention and figured out people's greatest food insecurity was during the week before the third of the following month. Her suggestion was that we stop spreading our church food efforts across the month so we could concentrate what we did during that week before social security checks arrived.

We followed her lead, serving a hot evening meal and providing supplemental services every month for the seven nights preceding the third of the next month. It was a simple shift in our hospitality that turned out to be significantly helpful. In the decades since then, I've been alert for simple observations giving birth to programs and efforts that matter.

A few years ago in San Francisco,

another compassionate individual named Doniece heard a woman on the street say that she could never get clean again. Those words spoken within her hearing wouldn't let Doniece go. When the words collided with her desire to do something about area homelessness, the radical hospitality of Lava Mae ("wash me") was born.

Doniece learned that there were precious few showers and toilets available for San Francisco's large homeless population. She also knew the city periodically retired aging city buses. Starting with the help of a few determined and creative engineers and the financial muscle of private citizens, Lava Mae converted three former city buses into mobile showers and toilets that maintain a regular schedule, six days a week in the Castro, Mission and Tenderloin neighborhoods of the city. Each mobile hygiene center has two units, one of them fully disabled--accessible, and each can provide 2,000 showers a week.

Lava Mae rests on the grounding conviction that showers and toilets

shouldn't be a luxury. Its hygiene on wheels won't wipe out homelessness in San Francisco, but as a mobile service, it isn't subject to rising rents and perhaps eviction and has the capacity to be flexible and go where the need is greatest. All this happens with retrofitted resources (the buses) that already exist.

The partnerships that support Lava Mae now are extensive, and Lava Mae is developing a toolbox for other communities to use with similar projects. Writer Anne Lamott sums up the heart of Lava Mae well: "You can change the world with a hot bath, if you sink into it from a place of knowing that you are worth profound care, even when you're dirty and rattled."

Groundcover News is a community of thought, observation, care and hospitality. The paper has brought much that is new, helpful and life-changing into being since its inception in 2010. There may be new shifts ahead that will compound what we are already doing. We never know what will be next or whose idea will send us forth.

Re-thinking the sex offender registry: Citizens for Justice

by Susan Beckett

"You mention sex offense to anyone and you're automatically in a different universe," stated a participant at the May 8, 2016 Ann Arbor meeting of Citizens for Justice.

Like many others there, the participant struggled with the loss of privacy and demonization that followed his conviction for a sex offense. Laws designed to protect children from predators have been applied indiscriminately in some states, Michigan being one of them.

Present at this second meeting of the local support group for people affected by sex offender convictions were parents whose sons were still in prison, men who had been convicted of crimes of a sexual nature and their wives, mothers, significant others, friends and sisters. All had suffered humiliation and fear when confronted by neighbors who had identified them from the sex offender registry.

Most offenders were young men at the time of their crime, having consensual sex with an underage woman or indulging their fantasies over the internet. Some of the men hadn't even known that they were breaking the law before they were swept up in internet predator stings spearheaded by former attorney general Mike Cox.



Groups discussed next steps to take at the conclusion of the Citizens for Justice meeting.

One man explained that he frequented an adult sex chat room, unaware that some of the other participants were underage. He never attempted to meet with anyone but he did send a link to an image of a sexual organ to a few of them. It was an image he found with a search, not one he posted. Nevertheless, distributing pornography was one of the many charges brought against him to leverage a plea bargain. (Each person he spoke with and each person he sent the link to elicited a separate charge.)

He acknowledges that his actions were immoral and accepts with equanimity the prison time he did. But like the others, he objects to the ongoing persecution that comes with being on

the sex offender registry – especially since studies have shown that the risk of recidivism for sex crimes is slight and the stigma of the registry reduces the appeal of life outside prison.

"It is extremely contrary to our cultural assumptions about sex offenders. It's hard for people to get their head around. Yes, there is a group of sex offenders that are high risk [of offending again] but that's a very small number of sex offenders. Most do not. And this is a pretty robust finding in the literature," said Dr. Janet Fay-Dumane, a state psychologist at Michigan's Center for Forensic Psychology.

A study by the United States Bureau of

Justice Statistics found that while the property crime recidivism rate was 73.8 percent, only 5.3 percent of sex offenders were arrested within three years of their release and some of those were for other kinds of crimes. (The difficulty obtaining employment coupled with the exclusion from federal benefits and many housing complexes and the need to pay parole supervision fees drives some of those released to other kinds of criminal activity.) Exhaustive studies, including one by the Department of Justice, have shown that public registries have had little or no impact on reducing crime rates.

Fay-Dumaine's testimony that few re-offend came at trial challenging the constitutionality of Michigan's law. One of the plaintiffs was a young man convicted for having consensual sex with his teenaged girlfriend. They are now together and have two children but the man is prohibited from attending school functions with his children and has trouble securing employment. The judge ruled that the Michigan law is so vague that compliance is almost impossible. While the state's appeal is being heard, the legislature is working on revising the law. SB 581 has passed the Senate and awaits action in the House.

Michigan's failure to distinguish between those who are a risk to the com-

see REGISTRY, page 5

Finding common ground: resolving disputes

by **Angie Martell**
Groundcover Contributor

As a mediator, I am always looking for ways to find common ground between the parties that come to see me. Unfortunately, when someone comes to me as a mediator, it is because they cannot agree or the matter has sufficiently escalated that they cannot “see the forest for the trees.”

Often the litigation they have initiated has created a line in the sand for their positions, which makes it very difficult for them to adjust their position, thus leaving them at a crossroads. How do parties mediate their dispute after they have engaged in a toxicity of exchanges in their pleadings and through their attorneys? How do parties move forward when they are locked in certain mindsets of fault, expectations of others and blame?

Unfortunately, the legal system and attorneys have not, on the whole, contributed positively to finding the common ground between parties. The current adversarial system places parties at odds with each other, often bringing out the worst in people rather than the best. Commencing an action by filing a complaint perpetuates allegations and statements that make reconciliation, forgiveness and resolutions difficult.

More and more, courts are looking to mediation as a way of helping parties resolve their disputes because they

understand that when parties can reach their own resolution, the parties are more willing to explore different possibilities for outcomes and the resolutions are more likely to be long-lasting.

Mediation is about seeing with new eyes, shifting the focus and telling a new story. When we see a situation with new eyes, we move beyond the current situation to another realm of possibility. We move beyond the blame and expectations of others to new possibilities: what would the present situation be like if I look at it in a different way? What would it be like if I leave behind all the old stuff I have been carrying – the anger, the guilt, the hurt – and reach a place where we move out of crisis to a place of peace with sustainable solutions?

I often ask people what they want out of mediation and the responses are generally the same: “I want to tell them how much they hurt me.” “I want them to apologize.” “I want them to hear me.” “I want to be done with this and move on.” “I want to feel good.”

These responses, while valid and important, do not always make it easy to achieve a resolution in mediation. It is important to apply these thoughts to the other party. They may feel hurt, too. They may want you to apologize. They may want to be heard by you. They may want to be done with this too and move on. They may want to feel good, too.

How we listen to each other and how we shift our focus is key in finding the common ground between us. Common ground is about looking at a situation with a fresh perspective. This is not easy, as the people closest to us can be our greatest triggers. Yet, common ground is not about finding an absolute agreement. Common ground is about finding “what can I live with?”

An example of this is a divorcing couple seeing their divorce through the eyes of their children. The arguments, the fights, and the words exchanged look quite different when viewed from the perspective of the children involved. Also looking to the future may be helpful: today’s fights and arguments may feel different to the parties five years later when they are in a different emotional state and have had time to reflect on their positions and their perspectives. Is that frying pan really worth fighting over?

Mediators encourage parties to work toward what can unite them rather than what is tearing them apart. We remind people what brought them together, what they were passionate about, and where they want to be. We ask people to listen and acknowledge each other and, above all, not to take it “personally.” When we don’t take it personally, the negativity doesn’t resonate as deeply in our system. This does not mean that you have to endure a difficult situation or allow yourself to be placed in harm’s

way. It means not engaging in the constant fight for control, dominance, and combative stances. If you keep fighting for something with closed fists and resisting, it is hard to receive and be open to new possibilities.

Mediation can take many different forms. Not all mediation is facilitative or transformative. Some mediators practice peace-making through peace-keeping circles, and others employ the healing practice of Ho’oponopono – a Hawaiian ritual of healing that invokes the forces of compassion, forgiveness, and gratitude. Not every kind of mediation is for everyone, and you’ll want to explore the different kinds of mediation out there to determine which may work the best for you.

Picking a mediator who understands the complexity and diversity of people is quite important, since the mediator must understand the people’s situations, their cultural backgrounds and the legal implications of their situations thoroughly in order to guide them to a successful outcome.

A conflict between people does not always have to be an overwhelming and litigious struggle, and the right mediator will help to de-escalate their struggle and guide the parties towards common ground that will enable them to move forward and find an acceptable resolution.

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A Meal for Every Child

by Sue Budin
Groundcover Contributor

Did you ever imagine that someone could make a delicious smoothie by pedaling a bicycle? The kids in Food Gatherers' Summer Food Service Program have done just that. This is just one of the creative ways that the program attracts children to their nutritious meals.

Now in its seventh year, the program has been a huge success in bringing two meals and one snack a day to low-income children, grades kindergarten through high school (or age 18), in Washtenaw County during the school summer break. The program starts on June 20 and runs until August 19. Funded by the Michigan Department of Education, the program serves six sites throughout Washtenaw County, a majority of them in Ypsilanti. Food Gatherers will supplement if the Department of Education funds run out.

LeRonica Roberts, coordinator of the program, brings her passion for delivering nutritious food to these underserved populations. She and two University of Michigan School of Public Health interns make sure to follow USDA requirements in establishing guidelines for meals and snacks and for training people on site.

As reported in 2014 school data, there are approximately 10,000 students eligible for a free or reduced-price school meal from four area school districts: Ann Arbor Public Schools, Washtenaw Intermediate School District, Ypsilanti Community Schools and Lincoln Consolidated School District. All of these students are also eligible for this free summer program. In the summer of 2015, 950 students



Children in Food Gatherers' Summer Food Service Program can make their own smoothies - they can even generate the power for the blender!

were served – less than 10 percent of those eligible. So outreach and publicity are essential to bring these services to more children.

Roberts is excited about a new program this coming summer that will be sponsored by the Sheriff's Department. "Ballin'" will take place at three sites and will combine basketball with a meal. She hopes the addition of sports will bring in more teens, the hardest students to attract, and that they will continue to come to meals offered later.

There will also be a pizza party at the Ypsilanti District Library's Superior Branch on June 20 that will coincide with the beginning of the summer reading program. And the Parkridge Community Center in Ypsilanti will provide a free hot dog lunch to all children who attend their summer festival. All of these joint programs will help in expanding the Summer Food Service

Program area and reaching more kids.

Along with providing food, Roberts and the interns engage the children in discussions and demonstrations about nutritious food. For example, in addition to fruit, kale is added to the smoothies mentioned above. A vegetable they might not eat on their own is shown to be quite palatable when mixed with other foods. And the kids are involved in the production, which makes it all the more meaningful.

One young girl, after eating a meal, raised her eyebrows and said to me, "It was really yummy!"

That's all the validation Roberts needs to promote this program. The interns also involve children in creative games to teach about nutrition. One is a guessing game that asks them to estimate the number of sugar cubes in a bottle

of pop (bringing to their attention the amount of sugar in each container) – sugar being a major contributor to unhealthy eating habits.

With the help of Eastern Michigan University social work students, summer feeding programs are expanding to two public housing complexes in Ypsilanti. The number of sites already designated for summer of 2016 is 26, up from 24 in 2015. (They started with 5 sites in 2013.) Last year, over 35,000 meals were served. This year, it is hoped that many more will take advantage of this service.

Two meals and a snack are provided at many but not all of the sites. Supplemental boxes of fresh produce are also offered at each site. Parents can sign up for these 20-pound boxes, which also include recipes and cooking tips.

Food Gatherers is very proud of this program as well as their regular donation programs throughout the year to food pantries, soup kitchens and residential programs, among others. They work with staff at summer sites to refer families to distribution centers and with other agencies to promote the summer program.

If Roberts had her way, no child in Washtenaw County would go hungry, and she is doing her very best to see that at least for the summer, children will have nutritious, tasty meals to keep them healthy and strong.

Grillin', Food Gatherers' annual delicious and fun-filled annual fundraiser, helps fund all of Food Gatherers programs, including the Summer Feeding Program. Grillin' is coming up soon on Sunday, June 12. Check out their website, foodgatherers.org/grillin for more information.

Sex offender registry reform

continued from page 3

munity and those who aren't has led us to having the fourth-largest registry in the country, despite our relatively small population. Among those included on the sex offender registry are people convicted of public urination, which can be an unavoidable problem for people without housing.

The persecution of people on the registry also affects victims. One woman at the meeting, a survivor of sexual assault herself, explained that victims are sometimes reluctant to come forward even for treatment, knowing that doing so will ruin the life of not only their assailant but also the lives of his family members.

By way of comparison, Minnesota uses risk assessment technology to allow returned citizens to reduce their scru-

tiny level and even be removed from the registry. Further, that state's general registry is only for the use of law enforcement and is not publicly available – although they do have a public list of predatory offenders.

The men caught up in the internet sting were largely well-educated and, prior to their convictions, gainfully employed in respected professions. Following their release from prison, they were unemployable. One man was filling out his personnel records for his new job when the results of his finger printing background check were returned. The employment offer was rescinded and he was asked to leave the

"Exhaustive studies... have shown that [sex offender] public registries have had little or no impact on reducing crime rates."

premises immediately.

Some manage to eke out a living by starting their own businesses or working as independent sub-contractors, but many enter the ranks of the long-term unemployed.

The risk of homelessness is high, not just from the lack of income but also because many apartment complexes have rules excluding sex offenders or are located within 1,000 feet of a school or playground. Additionally, parole conditions prohibit association with any convicted felon, which further limits the pool of people for potentially sharing a rental.

"Due to parole limitations, about the only place I could go [following my release from prison] was Michigan Works," shared one participant.

Another participant's mother shared that when he was released, her son said, "That's the hardest thing I'll ever go through." Then the next 10 years happened. She said that the social isolation is the most difficult consequence. The existence of a support group like Citizens for Justice finally offers them a community.

Citizens for Justice meetings are on Saturdays from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. Upcoming meetings are scheduled for July 9, September 10 and November 12 at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, 3257 Lohr Rd., Ann Arbor, across from Kohl's. Visit their website, www.micitizensforjustice.com, for more information.

The NEXUS pipeline – for people or profit?

by Persephone Hernandez-Vogt
U-M Student Contributor

Eastern Washtenaw County farmers fear that their land soon will be compromised by a new pipeline, and there is little they can do about it. Beginning in 2017, DTE Energy and Spectra Energy (NEXUS's main backers) anticipate starting construction on the NEXUS pipeline, which would bring natural gas from Kensington, Ohio, to Dawn Hub, Ontario by way of Michigan.

The NEXUS website describes the positive impact the project could have on the affected regions, such as generating thousands of jobs and "provid[ing] a foundation for future economic growth in the region." It claims to respond to growing demand in Ohio, Michigan and Ontario.

As NEXUS finalizes the pipeline's path, however, many are dissatisfied with the project, particularly the landowners whose properties the pipeline will pass through.

Kathy Schoen learned in August 2014 that her property, located near Willis, Michigan, could be affected. She received a letter about the pipeline from NEXUS. "I thought, 'Oh, it's probably a local supply line,'" Schoen explained in an interview with Groundcover. "I thought it was gas for our community."

At an open house in November, Schoen discovered that the 250-mile pipeline's



Author Persephone Hernandez-Vogt (left) learned about the Nexus pipeline's incursion into Washtenaw County from Willis farmer Kathy Schoen (right).

ultimate destination was Ontario. She was frustrated that her own community would not be the main group to benefit.

According to the NEXUS website, "the project will transport emerging Appalachian shale gas supplies directly to consumers in northern Ohio; south-eastern Michigan; the Chicago Hub in Illinois; and the Dawn Hub in Ontario, Canada."

But Schoen questions this claim. "I met with an army of representatives, very polite, telling us how wonderful this would be for us all, and I asked how much of this gas is staying in the Mid-

west. Not one of them could tell us," Schoen said.

The representatives told her that she could buy gas back, but Schoen remains skeptical that the pipeline will be useful to the local community. "We have pipelines that aren't running at full capacity. I'm very convinced it's just a money grab for the natural gas industry."

Beyond simply questioning the utility of the pipeline for Michigan residents, Schoen feels that a pipeline on her property will fundamentally violate her sense of ownership. "You can't build on it, you can farm on it but yield is lower,

and they can come on it at any time. They don't have to tell you they're coming, it's just theirs."

On their website, NEXUS attempts to allay landowner concerns, writing that the project "will work closely with every landowner to ensure that all activities... will cause minimal impacts and disruption to their property and daily lives."

For Ron Kardos, who lives in Oceola Township and has two pipelines running through his 50-acre farm, the presence of a pipeline is intrinsically disruptive.

"The property no longer feels like your property and you can't do what you would normally do," Kardos said. Having pipelines has interfered with his ability to enjoy his land: "They did maintenance repairs in the middle of winter and I can't even begin to describe the destruction they caused. The natural wildlife has been severely disrupted and [another] big issue we have is soil compaction."

Sam Woods, who owns a 200-acre field in Lenawee County, echoed Kardos' environmental concerns. Woods already has two pipelines running through his property, and NEXUS intends to add a third, the impact of which on his crops would likely be severe.

"They dig a trench, and the subsoil is brought to the top," said Woods

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Picking a gym – Better Living Fitness aims to fit you

by Jess Salisbury
Groundcover Contributor

If an Instagram feed full of post-workout selfies and store shelves stuffed with gym-inspired witticisms is any indication, “fit” is in. With our culture’s growing emphasis on maintaining an active lifestyle, it’s no wonder gyms are popping up on every corner, each with their own shtick for wooing potential members. But maybe large corporate health clubs aren’t your thing. Maybe your ideal gym is as honest and homegrown as your favorite local coffee shop.

There are many to choose from, some of which specialize in a particular kind of training, for example boxing, biking, dance or Pilates. Some gyms cater to individuals who work out on their own while others offer group experiences and classes. Most have a basic set of barbells but many also have a selection of machines that may include a workout circuit and cardio options such as elliptical trainers, treadmills and stationary bikes.

If you want a personal experience along with general equipment, Better Living Fitness (BLF), a locally-founded health club that’s working to get Ann Arbor up and moving, may be what you’re looking for.

“Our space is perfect for people who do not love big-box gyms,” trainer and dietitian Mark Thiesmeyer, the club’s founder, said. “On the one hand, like larger gyms, we are well-equipped with elliptical machines, bikes, strength equipment, barbells, and a Jones Ma-



Trainer Mark Thiesmeyer helps ensure that correct technique is used for each form of exercise.

chine (utilized in exercises such as squats). However, unlike other gyms, our staff will greet you by name, hand you a workout towel and offer you complimentary citrus water or coffee after your workout. Additionally, our trainers and instructors are degreed professionals often with a decade or more experience in the field of fitness.”

Thiesmeyer specifically wanted to address the common excuses and barriers to getting in shape, working with people who lack time, have a bad back, hip or knee, and even those who simply cannot find a workout regimen they actually enjoy doing. BLF’s extensive expansion over the last year, opening a Better Living Fitness Center at 834B Phoenix Drive, near Ellsworth, was part of Thiesmeyer’s effort to provide a

more well-rounded gym, better suited for addressing more aspects of fitness, like posture, flexibility, stress management, sleep and balance.

Money is another barrier the club seeks to break down – individual sessions with a trainer cost \$65 an hour, but BLF is willing to work with clients to find additional options better suited to their financial situations.

Thiesmeyer’s initial idea for BLF came in 1999, after working as a consultant for companies seeking to keep their employees healthier in order to reduce health-related costs. He recognized that many of the problems that plagued people could have been prevented

through lifestyle changes.

According to Thiesmeyer, letting any aspect of fitness slide can cause the general quality of life to slip. Healthy living is important for improving more than just the body, as he notes that mood, relationships and well-being prosper with proper nutrition and exercise.

“I began personal training to help clients be strong and feel good,” Thiesmeyer said.

And it seems that, so far, BLF is reaching its goal of helping others reach their goals. Many of its members are noticing a drastic change in their own lives. One client, Katherine, noted that prior to working with Thiesmeyer nearly 10 years ago, she was not a fan of working out. Thanks to Thiesmeyer’s strengthening regimen, her persistent knee pain has been almost completely eliminated.

So if you see the need for greater fitness in your life, find yourself a gym that suits you. BLF is offering Groundcover readers a chance to try them out without paying an initiation fee by bringing in the ad on this page.

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Kiwanis Thrift Sale WEST
Fri & Sat 9am-1pm
102 N. Staebler Rd. at W. Jackson Rd.

Sudoku ★★★★★ 4puz.com

9						1	4	
			9		3		7	5
5				1				9
	8				1	9		6
		9		7		8		
4		6	3				1	
8				2				3
3	2		5		8			
	9	1						2

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Cryptoquote:

OXA IPKO, OXA IGAKAEO
PEN OXA UJOJGA PGA
GAPQQB YEA: OXAB PGA
OYNPB.
— XPGGRAO SAAFXAG

Clue: $\mathcal{H} = \Omega$

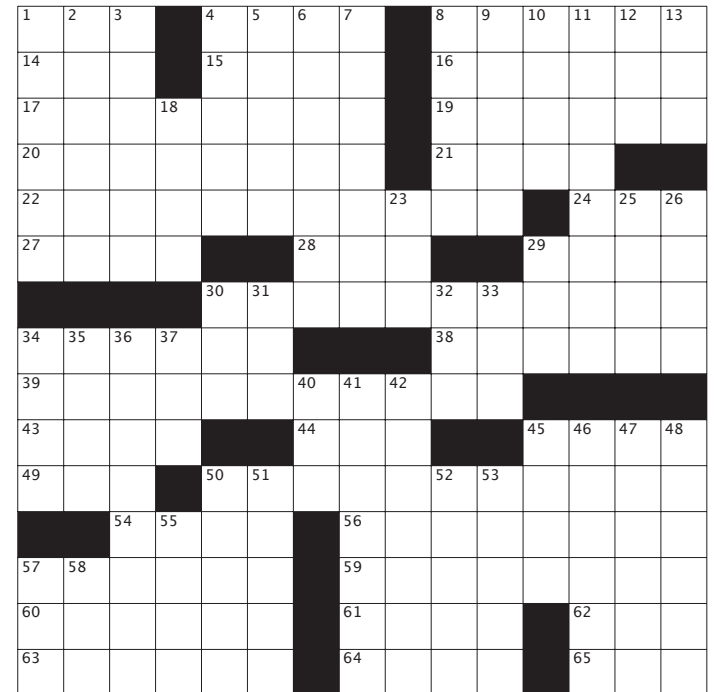
Split Decision Peter A. Collins

ACROSS

1. On vacation
4. Shower problem
8. Vector counterpart, in physics
14. Abbas's grp.
15. Out of port
16. Working
17. Those in the right frame of mind?
19. Bushwacked
20. Certain ideologue
21. Henchmen
22. * Some game timers
24. Nashville sch.
27. Musicians Straw and Barrett
28. Odysseus's rescuer
29. Sabado y Domingo
30. * Dirty deeds
34. Tight types
38. Quidditch position
39. * Colorado and Silverado
43. Deal (with)
44. Work-sweat connector
45. Potion portion
49. 1040 pro
50. * Takes the best
54. Move, for short
56. "That wasn't a joke!!"
57. Off-season deals, sometimes
59. Kraft product since 1927
60. Reach full value
61. Cosmo competitor
62. Small fry
63. See 36-Down
64. Revolutionary sewer
65. ABBA's home

DOWN

1. Physics discipline
2. Zaftig
3. Ended a stable pregnancy?
4. Partners of sirs
5. "A hit, a very palpable hit" speaker in "Hamlet"
6. Doesn't disturb
7. Florida NASCAR city
8. Vowel seller, on TV
9. Some bra freatures



© Peter A. Collins (Published via Across Lite)

10. Are you lookin' ___?
11. Tube in a purse, often
12. "___ Maria"
13. Common color for 11-Down
18. Line on a craps table
23. Fish or Friday, for example
25. Rice wine
26. "Miracle on Ice" side
29. Peter out
30. Wail
31. FDR follower
32. Reproachful sound
33. Hi-___
34. Year Dante's "Divine Comedy" begins
35. Chain with links?
36. With 63-Across, restaurant-goers' request (and what the central five letters do in the answers to the starred clues)
37. Title woman in the 1951 Best Picture winner
40. Strasse, across the Rhine
41. Against the current
42. NBA All Star Anthony
45. Go to 35-Down, perhaps
46. Corners on a cube, and others
47. Way up?
48. Kind of sale
50. Pencil-pusher
51. They might wind up in your backyard?
52. Blows one's stack, in a way
53. Works on a parking lot
55. The E of NEA: Abbr.
57. Starz alternative
58. "Go team!"

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following list is our Vendor Code of Conduct, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1, or the face value of the paper. I agree not to ask for more than face value or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover News.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell

to or buy papers from other Groundcover News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

If you see any Groundcover News vendors not abiding by the code of conduct, please report the activity to:
contact@groundcovernews.com
734-707-9210



Bethlehem
United Church of Christ
423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734-665-6149

Bethlehem Church is the home of the Groundcover office

Sunday Worship Times

8:30 am and 10:00 am

Fellowship Hour follows each service

June Community Events – Welcome!

- June 5 (Sun.) Communion Sunday
- June 5 (Sun.) Church Picnic in the backyard
- June 5 (Sun.) Bethlehem volunteer day at the Delonis Center
- June 9 (Thur.) Bethlehem volunteer day at Alpha House
- June 11 (Sat) German Pretzel Sales, 10:30 – 12:00, \$1 or \$10 dozen
This is the last pretzel sale until September
- June 19 (Sun.) Happy Father's Day
- June 19-25 Church Mission Trip: Habitat for Humanity, Flint
- June 20 (Mon.) First Day of Summer!!!

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BethlehemChurchA2



bethlehem-ucc.org

The NEXUS pipeline – for people or profit?

continued from page 6

is brought to the top,” said Woods by phone. “Unless that soil has been meticulously separated into layers and the topsoil laid aside and separated from the rest, you’re going to have a lot of heavy clay subsoil in the root zone of the crop when you start to plant the field again.”

Because subsoil is denser than topsoil, it is difficult for a plant’s roots to penetrate, he explained. Clay in the subsoil hampers the plant’s ability to absorb water, and the subsoil is also less nutrient-rich than topsoil. “Fields are reduced right where the pipeline disturbance occurred, and it’s not just for one year but for many years after the pipeline has been established,” Woods explained.

Landowners will be compensated for the easement agreements that allow the pipeline to run through their land, and for “damages to any structures, landscaping or decorative trees directly impacted by the construction of the facilities.” NEXUS also says it will pay market value for the rights, as well as “a rental value for any additional land rights ... for use during construction.” As Schoen pointed out, however, that

payment is taxed, and the responsibility still falls on landowners to pay property taxes on the land NEXUS uses.

Landowners are not the only people who will be affected by the pipelines. At least three schools in the Lincoln Consolidated School District would be within 1,000 feet of the NEXUS pipeline, including one elementary school. The NEXUS website emphasizes the safety precautions it will take, detailing its multifaceted approach. One of its statements on safety reads, “While we already have a strong safety record, our goal is zero incidents, as no incident is acceptable.” Among the safety measures NEXUS takes are a special coating to prevent corrosion, remote-control shutoff, and regular inspection of the pipelines. These inspections, however, mean an ongoing NEXUS presence on the property of landowners.

Schoen worked on two anti-fracking campaigns prior to receiving the NEXUS letter; now she has begun a new campaign. She runs a Facebook page called “NO Nexus Pipeline in Michigan & Ohio,” where she posts information about NEXUS developments, lists actions that can be taken to prevent the project, and provides resources to land-

owners. She also successfully petitioned the board of Lincoln Consolidated Schools to post information about the pipelines on their website.

NEXUS continues to go through the necessary steps to begin building, including filing a formal application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). FERC is soliciting comments on the potential environmental effects of NEXUS; community members can submit their comments under docket number CP16-22-000 for the Commission to use in its environ-

mental impact statement.

Although Schoen encourages people to submit their statements, she is not optimistic about the results. “FERC has never met a pipeline they didn’t like.”

Kardos also doubts that a legalistic approach will do much to prevent the pipelines. “Everyone, including the companies, are following the rules,” Kardos said. “The problem is, the rules need to be changed. Property rights need to be protected from corporate greed.”



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FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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Free Financial Literacy Program:
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website: <http://www.uwwashtenaw.org/financial-stability>

Financial Literacy Program

Brian Rakovitis

(734) 677-7206

brakovitis@uwwashtenaw.org

Financial Coaching

Marshall Averill

(734) 677-7205

maverill@uwwashtenaw.org



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Ode to a Music Teacher: Estar Cohen



Estar Cohen coaches vendor Eddy Powell in voice at Oz's.

by Eddy Powell
Groundcover Vendor #32
Arranged by Maria Hagen, Groundcover Intern

Estar is doing a great job,
I'm not saying I wasn't always good
I could always sing but she fueled my potential,
She's a great person,
She helped me clear up the places where I needed help,
You know what I'm saying.

She's helped me interact better with people on the street,
Seen my fees go up a lot, \$75 to \$175 in a week,
I've got to widen, open up more,
You know what I'm saying.

I'm learning "Only One" by Sam Smith
Because it's really, really pretty.
I spent two hours on YouTube just learning the chords,
You know what I'm saying.
YouTube is good with instructions too,
I have to pause and go back
It gives me experience to knock out everything else,
You know what I'm saying.

She plays piano too,
I've really got to give her credit.

She's very warm and patient, gentle, understanding and loving,
Because of that I've grown enormously,
She's such a quality person you can't put a stamp on it
I'm not saying I wasn't always good
But I'm so much better now.

Daffodil bouquet

by Elizabeth "Lit" Kurtz
Groundcover vendor #159

The daffodils lie limply on the ground
The spring chill oh so cold!
They cannot rise against the frost
Because they have no soul
When the weather's fair
They will again arise
Their subtle beauty tell
But when I arise and walk again
Still all will not be well

But still I rise from the ground
Despite the chill and cold
Yet as I walk away
There remains upon the ground forever
A small piece of my soul
I am not a daffodil
Though upon them I love to gaze
I am of a higher calling
Though my life betrays

Sleeping on the frosted ground
My destiny yet unknown
Unlike the daffodil when I arise
I still will have no home



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Meet Greg S., Vendor #311

by Maria Hagen

Greg S. likes to drive fast. His dream growing up was to own a Corvette. Greg grew up around cars in Detroit, often driving south with his grandfather, speeding along stretches of freeway. "I drove south two times a week," he said. "I used to be the lookout for police."

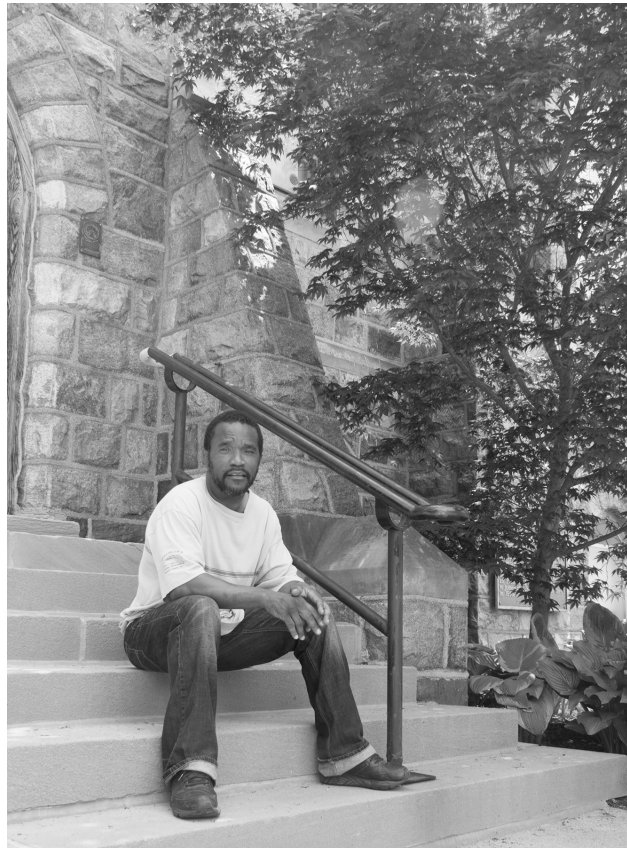
His grandfather owned old-time cars, including a 1956 Chevrolet Bel Air. These trips south to Alabama were the only times that Greg saw his sister, Karen, who is four years older.

As a child, Greg dreamed of racing cars or motorcycles, or playing football professionally. He wanted to become rich so he could take care of his mother and his grandmother who helped raise him – and to be able to afford a Corvette.

"My granny worked for U of M for 38 years," Greg said. "I wanted to take care of her." His mother, aunt, and grandmother all spoiled him growing up. "They gave me whatever I wanted," Greg added with a smile over his plate of food. We were having dinner with his girlfriend at the First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor.

"I used to lay my head in my granny's lap and she would pick the lint out of my hair," Greg said. "I used to run all over the house finding lint to put in my hair and she would always pick it out. But at some point, there was no more lint and I stopped doing it."

The dream of playing football seems farfetched for some, but not for Greg, whose Uncle Otis played and coached for the Oakland Raiders. Greg began



Greg sells Groundcover while looking for a job as a machine operator. Securing housing would be easier with a regular paycheck. Photo by: Maria Hagen.

playing football early on, taking the position of running back where the fact that he was short didn't matter.

"I played with the older guys, 'cause I was so fast," Greg said. "They'd tell me to just take off, we'll throw you the ball." In high school Greg played on the same team as Dan Williams, who became a defensive end for the Denver Broncos and the Kansas City Chiefs.

For fun, Greg and his friends would go to downtown Detroit, especially for events like the Heritage Festival. "We

went to get girls," he said, laughing. "You had to look sharp then. This was before cell phones, we had beepers then. When you got beeped, you had to go to a pay phone or a house phone."

In order to drive more cars, Greg learned to drive a manual transmission. "I learned from a buddy," Greg said. "We were driving on the freeway and he pulls over. We switched seats and he says 'Go.'" It was stop and go for a while, with his buddy explaining the way the clutch worked and how to coordinate the pedals amid the speeding traffic.

"I can go anywhere on a freeway," Greg said proudly. "You put me anywhere on a freeway and I'll find my way."

grinning.

Instead of the big house he had envisioned for himself, Greg lives in a hotel, sharing a room with his girlfriend who introduced him to Groundcover News. She was new in Ann Arbor and had stumbled across the vendors in town.

"She got frustrated selling the papers," Greg told me. By now we had finished the meatloaf entrée and were on to the ice cream dessert. "So I decided to give it a try after work. I was good at it, too." When Greg lost his job, he became a vendor himself.

Greg and his girlfriend pool their resources, trying to find a cheaper, more permanent place to live. The first difficulty they encounter is that landlords don't want to rent a room to a couple. Then there is the problem that they don't have the money for a deposit, nor have the landlords accepted their proof of income letters from Groundcover News. Greg is hoping to land a factory job as machine operator which should help resolve the housing situation and start his life back on the right track.

Cryptoquote Solution

The past, the present
and the future are
really one: they are
today.

– Harriet Beecher Stowe

9	7	3	2	6	5	1	4	8
2	1	8	9	4	3	6	7	5
5	6	4	8	1	7	3	2	9
7	8	2	4	5	1	9	3	6
1	3	9	6	7	2	8	5	4
4	5	6	3	8	9	2	1	7
8	4	5	1	2	6	7	9	3
3	2	7	5	9	8	4	6	1
6	9	1	7	3	4	5	8	2

1	O	F	F	4	M	O	L	D	8	S	C	A	L	A	R
14	P	L	O	15	A	S	E	A	16	A	C	T	I	V	E
17	T	E	A	P	A	R	T	Y	19	J	U	M	P	E	D
20	I	S	L	A	M	I	S	T	21	A	P	E	S		
22	C	H	E	S	S	C	L	O	23	C	K	S	24	T	S
27	S	Y	D	S					28	I	N	O	29	D	I
					30	C	H	E	A	P	T	R	I	C	K
34	M	I	S	E	R	S			38	S	E	E	K	E	R
39	C	H	E	V	Y	T	R	U	42	C	K	S			
43	C	O	P	E					44	U	P	A	45	D	O
49	C	P	A		50	C	H	E	51	R	Y	P	I	C	K
				54	R	E	L	O	56	I	M	E	A	N	T
57	T	R	A	D	E	S			59	V	E	L	V	E	E
60	M	A	T	U	R	E			61	E	L	L	E	62	T
63	C	H	E	C	K	S			64	R	O	S	S	65	S

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1/2	\$299.95	\$399.95	5 X 14 or 10 X 6.5
Full Page	\$495.95	\$669.95	10 X 14

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Migas (Tex-Mex Omelets)



by **Liz Bauman**
Groundcover Contributor

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 6 large eggs
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 cup bite-sized tortilla chips (unsalted)
- 1/2 cup chopped tomatoes
- 2/3 cup shredded cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese
- Chopped jalapeno pepper (optional)

Directions:

In a heavy skillet, cook and stir chopped onion in butter over medium heat until onion is soft.

Whisk together eggs and milk.

Add tortilla chips to egg mixture.

Pour mixture into skillet with onion.

Cook, stirring until egg begins to set (about 1 minute).

Add tomatoes and cook, stirring, until eggs are set.

Remove from skillet and top immediately with cheese.

Garnish with fresh jalapeno pepper, if desired.

Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

So delicious any time of the day!



An important series of meetings about Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in Ann Arbor kicks off June 20 at the City Council meeting, 6:30 p.m. on the second floor of City Hall, 301 E. Huron St. ADUs will increase affordable housing, help seniors stay in their homes and decrease urban sprawl. Weekly Thursday meetings are convening at 11:00 a.m. at Sweetwaters on Washington and Ashley to strategize and organize for these meetings. Look there for the folks in the picture above or text 734-660-2140 to participate.

Strange (but Mostly True) Stories About a Mother and her Daughter • Cy Klone © 2016

I suppose you don't much care for this time of year not really knowing your father at all....

No, it's not my favorite time. Do you even know what happened to him?

Sometimes as young cats we expect things to be a certain way and they turn out to be another. Neither of us was very mature and in hindsight I doubt he was ever ready to settle down....

Papa was a rolling stone?

Something like that.

Wherever he took a nap was his home?

I see what you did there. Seriously, though, it's very easy to father a child. It's very difficult to be a father to a child.

Good thing we both have an awesome human dad looking out for us now!

Happy Father's Day to all the real fathers, biological or not, for their daily labors of love!